

Siuslaw News
 P.O. Box 10
 Florence, OR 97439

Opinion

The First Amendment
 Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.

A need to define public art in Florence

Recently, the City of Florence's Urban Renewal Agency made funds available for public art, focusing on the historic downtown district. As many have already noticed, public trash receptacles along Bay Street have been "enhanced" with bright colors and designs.

This conversation attempts to raise the question of who public art serves and what might be appropriate.

It could be argued that since funds are public, there should be general input or consensus. It seems that the art committee, as the decision makers, should be asking themselves

whether they have been open-minded in reaching their decisions — or if they have already decided what public art is and its contextual appropriateness.

The Old Town area is reflective of its historic origins, the bay and Siuslaw River Bridge. The bay is also abundant with wildlife. The stately lamplights and the historic buildings provide visitors — as well as residents — with the pride of the past.

For many who live and work

GUEST OPINION
 SUBMITTED BY RON HOAGLAND
 PROPERTY OWNER AND FLORENCE RESIDENTS

here, it is still a "village" reflecting the best of older coastal communities.

Along with the redesigned public trash receptacles, there has been discussion that the steps leading down from the Siuslaw River Bridge, designed by Conde McCullough, should be colorfully enhanced. While some allurements might be appropri-

ate for Miller Park, is this the kind of decorative feature that should be viewed on a daily basis in Old Town?

It should be pointed out that the Siuslaw River Bridge is on the National Register of Historical Places. While changes, currently underway, are aimed at improving its longevity, attempts to redecorate a part of one of McCullough's most beautiful and artful bridges isn't appropriate.

The City of Florence has been pursuing Old Town becoming a Historic

District, which would give it additional appeal to visitors and enhance economic opportunity.

As the city's motto states: "Our Future is Before Us."

This might be the right moment to consider how public art fits this context.

— Nancy Archer,
 Arts Administrator
 — Judy Fleagle,
 Author and local historian
 — Ron Hoagland,
 Property owner and resident
 — Lynn Taylor,
 Architect

LETTERS

ELECTORAL COLLEGE DEPRIVES MANY VOTERS

Some people, citing the U. S. Constitution, say we should keep the Electoral College.

I think it's important to keep in mind that those who wrote the U.S. Constitution had never tried to put together such a document. The opinions of factions were present from 13 soon-to-be states. Framing and ratifying the document was a long and difficult process.

In the Constitution — which was created in a very different time from the present — it's difficult even finding the right to vote listed, except for the Electoral College system.

It was agreed that only white males who owned property could vote.

Some delegates from the Constitutional Convention didn't trust ordinary citizens to vote, so the cumbersome extra layer of the Electoral College was added. People from slave-owning states wanted to ensure they could compete with other states in influencing the federal government. To boost population figures, they counted each black person as 3/5ths of a person, in addition to the free (mostly white) residents.

I think it's important to note that the Constitution was amended in:

- 1804 (12th) to clarify (somewhat) the Electoral College process
- 1868 (14th) indicates that male citizens 21 or older are eligible to vote
- 1870 (15th) to allow black men to vote
- 1913 (17th) to allow citizens of each state to elect their own national Senators (previously



done by each state's legislature)

- 1920 (19th) to allow women to vote

The U. S. Constitution grants to the states powers not listed in the main document, including the conduct of elections. This seems reasonable for elections within each state. The President is supposed to govern the whole country and all the people in it. For this reason, the President should be elected by all the individual voters in the country.

I don't believe that every state colored red on the TV screen has only people who vote Republican any more than I believe all the blue-colored states only voted Democrat.

Five times in our history the person elevated to the Presidency did not win a majority of popular votes.

I believe the Electoral College deprives many people of their right to have their vote count.

— Shirley Nelson
 Florence

LESS HATE, MORE RESPECT

The Electoral College versus the popular vote was a hot topic during the recent (May 29) Ron Wyden Town Hall meeting. Some people at the meeting expressed their desire to eliminate the Electoral College. Even Sen. Wyden supported it, and the idea of allowing the next presidential candidate to be elected by the popular vote.

Currently under the U.S. Constitution, the person who receives the most electoral votes becomes president — even if he or she does not

receive either a plurality or a majority of the popular vote.

In fact, I feel we should create an Oregon electoral college system to elect our next governor.

Coastal residents — and that would be Southern California, right up through Seattle and the eastern coastline — need to accept that they do not speak or vote for the people who live in the "flyover states." The electoral college ensures that all who live within the United States have a voice on who becomes President because the person(s) campaigning must be cognizant of all the different types of people and cultures that exist.

As such, a coastal resident living in an area with a large population (and number of voters) wouldn't have much in common with voters in a less populated area such as Kentucky, which is dealing with the loss of jobs and homes due to diminishing use of coal.

That being said, I wholeheartedly support Sen. Wyden's suggestions on dealing with illegal immigrants, which is basically enforcing the laws already in place and creating a way to provide a means to citizenship for some immigrants who are already here but not legal.

Personally, I feel we could use a little less hate towards Trump and his supporters — something that was apparent during the Town Hall meeting. Through the first 16 questions, or more than an hour and 15 minutes, people raised questions about impeachment, getting rid of the Electoral College, "Trumpgate," health care, etc. During that time, there wasn't one

person being booed — until someone asked a question as a Trump supporter.

That was absolutely heartbreaking as she is a friend.

As Sen. Wyden put it, let's do this the Oregon way, which is mostly a red state, with no more hate — and a whole lot more respect.

— Virginia Reynolds,
 PCP Republican Party
 Florence

DIFFERING OPINIONS MAKES A DEMOCRACY

Though I didn't attend the recent David Barsamian speaking event at the Siuslaw Public Library (May 19), I have looked forward to his "Alternative radio" broadcasts on various public radio stations.

I understand that some people didn't like his critical view of the President and the direction the country is heading.

However, it is differing opinions and the right to speak those opinions that makes a democracy. We could all live somewhere like Syria, where a hint of dislike of the Assad regime will likely get you abducted, imprisoned, tortured or killed.

I treasure our country's checks and balances, its diversity, and its freedoms regarding speech and the press to hold truth to power when need be.

— Julie M. MacFarlane
 Florence

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

The Siuslaw News welcomes letters to the editor as part of a community discussion of issues on the local, state and national level.

Emailed letters are preferred. Handwritten or typed letters must be signed. All letters need to include full name, address and phone number; only name and city will be printed. Letters should be limited to about 300 words. Letters are subject to editing for length, grammar and clarity. Publication of any letter is not guaranteed and depends on space available and the volume of letters received.

Libelous, argumentative and anonymous letters or poetry, or letters from outside our readership area will not be published.

Send letters to:
 nhickson@thesiuslawnews.com

USPS# 497-660 Copyright 2017 © Siuslaw News

Siuslaw News

Published every Wednesday and Saturday at 148 Maple St. in Florence, Lane County, Oregon. A member of the National Newspaper Association and Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association. Periodicals postage paid at Florence, Ore. Postmaster, send address changes to: Siuslaw News, P.O. Box 10, Florence, OR 97439; phone 541-997-3441; fax 541-997-7979. All press releases may be sent to PressReleases@TheSiuslawNews.com.

James Rand
 Jenna Bartlett
 Ned Hickson
 Erik Chalhoub

Oregon Group Publisher (541) 265 8571
 Publisher, ext. 318
 Editor, ext. 313
 Consulting Editor (831) 761-7353
 Email: echalhoub@register-pajaronian.com
 Marketing Director, ext. 326
 Office Supervisor, ext. 312
 Production Supervisor
 Press Manager

DEADLINES:

Wednesday Issue—General news, Monday noon; Budgets, four days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Monday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Monday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Friday 5 p.m.
 Saturday Issue—General news, Thursday noon; Budgets, two days prior to publication; Regular classified ads, Thursday 1 p.m.; Display ads, Thursday noon; Boxed and display classified ads, Wednesday 5 p.m. Soundings, Tuesday 5 p.m.

NEWSPAPER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

In Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$71; 10-weeks subscription, \$18; Out of Lane County — 1-year subscription, \$94; 10-weeks subscription, \$24; Out of State — 1-year subscription, \$120; Out of United States — 1-year subscription, \$200; E-Edition Online Only (Anywhere) — 1-year subscription, \$65.

Mail subscription includes E-Edition.
 Website and E-Edition: www.TheSiuslawNews.com

WHERE TO WRITE

Pres. Donald Trump
 The White House
 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
 Washington, D.C. 20500
 Comments: 202-456-1111
 Switchboard: 202-456-1414
 FAX: 202-456-2461
 TTY/TDD Comments:
 202-456-6213
 www.whitehouse.gov

Gov. Kate Brown
 160 State Capitol
 900 Court St.
 Salem, OR 97301-4047
 Governor's Citizens' Rep.
 Message Line 503-378-4582
 www.oregon.gov/gov

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden
 221 Dirksen Senate Office Bldg
 Washington, DC 20510

202-224-5244
 541-431-0229
 www.wyden.senate.gov

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley
 313 Hart Senate Office Bldg
 Washington, DC 20510
 202-224-3753/FAX: 202-228-3997
 541-465-6750
 www.merkley.senate.gov

U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (4th Dist.)
 2134 Rayburn HOB
 Washington, DC 20515
 202-225-6416
 541-269-2609/ 541-465-6732
 www.defazio.house.gov

State Sen. Arnie Roblan (Dist. 5)
 900 Court St. NE - S-417
 Salem, OR 97301
 503-986-1705

FAX: 503-986-1080
 Email:
 Sen.ArnieRoblan@state.or.us

State Rep. Caddy McKeown
 (Dist. 9)
 900 Court St. NE
 Salem, OR 97301
 503-986-1409
 Email:
 rep.caddymckeown@state.or.us

West Lane County Commissioner
 Jay Bozievich
 125 E. Eighth St.
 Eugene, OR 97401
 541-682-4203
 FAX: 541-682-4616
 Email:
 Jay.Bozievich@co.lane.or.us